

**Minutes of the Meeting  
August 6, 1998**

Projects Reviewed

Tolt Treatment Facilities DBO Project  
Intracorp First & Broad Development  
Benaroya Hall (site visit)  
Pacific Place (sign permit special exception)  
Sound Transit

Convened: 8:30am

Adjourned: 4:30pm

Commissioners Present

Barbara Swift, Chair  
Moe Batra  
Gail Dubrow  
Bob Foley  
Rick Sundberg

Staff Present

Michael Read  
Peter Aylsworth  
Vanessa Murdock  
Rebecca Walls

080698.1      Project: **Tolt Treatment Facility DBO Project**  
                  Phase: Briefing  
      Previous Review: January 1, 1992  
          Presenters: Scott Haskins, Seattle Public Utilities  
                  Elizabeth Kelly, Seattle Public Utilities  
          Time: 1.5 hr. (0.3%)

Seattle has recently completed solicitation, evaluation, and negotiations for the design, construction, and operation of its first water filtration facility. The Tolt Treatment Facility, located about eight miles east of Duvall adjacent to the Tolt Pipeline, will be an ozonation and filtration facility with continued chlorination and fluorination treatment processes currently provided at the Tolt facility. Seattle's water supply comes from two sources, the Cedar Watershed and the Tolt Watershed, neither of which are currently filtered. The Tolt Watershed is approximately 14,000 acres and has an 18.1 billion gallon storage capacity. Filtration and ozonation of the Tolt water source will improve water quality for changing regulations, improve system reliability, and create additional water supply.



South fork Tolt Reservoir



Rendering of Tolt Facility

The Tolt facility was conceived as a design-build-operate (DBO) project with a set of quality and quantity standards established by Seattle Public Utilities. In this approach the city let the four proposal teams figure out how to meet these standards, in addition to accepting the responsibility for the results. Incentives and penalties were built into the process to ensure that the standards are met efficiently. The project's overarching principles include:

- integrating vendor responsibilities-maintaining a link between design, construction, and operation
- specifying performance standards-letting the vendors respond
- encouraging technical innovation-using competition in innovation and price
- assign risk to party best able to manage

The city assumes the risk for financing, site acquisition, raw water quality, and change in law while the company will assume the responsibilities for permitting, design, construction, operation, and treated water quality.

Each proponent was required to have a single project guarantor to cover all aspects of the project for 25 years. The selected project team, CDM Philip, chose a simple teaming arrangement with clear delineation of responsibilities. The city also utilized the consultant services of R W Beck/Malcolm Pirnie throughout the review process.

As a result of this DBO project, valuable experience has been gained along with the knowledge that simple teaming arrangements work well, that early integration of staff from the designer, contractor, and operator is important, and that value engineering workshops were useful in bringing together different interests of the team.

### **Discussion:**

- Dubrow:** Will the operator labor standards be set by the City?
- Haskins:** They will receive prevailing wages. We are also working with City Council.
- Kelly:** We have required that the operators be paid comparable wages to other operators at similar facilities throughout the region .
- Batra:** Who will ultimately be responsible if the water does not meet safe drinking water standards?
- Kelly:** The city has the first layer of responsibility. The project agreement has extremely large penalties for not meeting standards built into it. The city is the first contact and would deal directly with the Washington State Department of Health and the operating company.
- Haskins:** We have also built into the agreement large incentives for meeting and beating current standards.
- Kelly:** It was a deliberate process from the start that forced project teams to design a high quality facility. We also wanted to streamline the process and save money by eliminating some levels of conservatism. Many times facility designers will over-design equipment and systems to avoid potential shortfalls and subsequent penalties.
- Scott:** They will receive \$5,000 per month bonuses for perfect performance of the facility. There wasn't a huge profit in the construction of the facility, but there are strong incentives built into the project over the long term operation.
- Dubrow:** Who is responsible for monitoring the water quality?
- Kelly:** Both the city and the contractor will be responsible for monitoring. The contractor will supply the city with reports and we will do our own separate inspections.
- Dubrow:** This is an extremely structured process and a good example of a public-private partnership. What sort of controls or standards were used to ensure high quality design?
- Haskins:** Initially we ensured quality design by selecting quality firms to design the facility. We are transferring the risk of the design itself to the project team and are relying on their expertise to achieve quality design. We will also have project reviews at various design phases to ensure that the facility has a long life, is functional, and will be in good condition when the city resumes control of it. The Department of Health will also review the design.
- Dubrow:** What kind of design performance standards, rather than engineering or water treatment standards, were used? What were the review processes?
- Swift:** Seattle utilities seem to consistently develop good civic facilities. What kind of design principles or goals drove the physical appearance of the facility?
- Kelly:** One of the aesthetic criteria was that it should blend into its surrounding environment of wetlands and forests. The design has been completed with a series of four to five major reviews ensuring compliance with the service agreement and proposals.
- Dubrow:** Is there a way to have design experts actively involved in the design process?
- Kelly:** Our consultant services team, RW Beck/Malcom Pirnie, has the design expertise and were involved in the review process. Arai/Jackson Architects provided design review assistance as a subconsultant to the RW Beck/Malcom Pirnie team.
- Haskins:** We don't consider this an extremely public facility, such as the Cedar River facility will probably be. We are pleased with the design going beyond functional requirements.
- Swift:** I think that this has been a very thoughtful and rigorous process. I recall that Marcia Wagoner was keeping tabs on this project and that Rick Sundberg and Bob Foley were also involved.

- Foley:** I am impressed with the very thorough presentation and the solution. In my experience, engineering oriented projects tend to lack development in terms of architectural design. In this case I think the solution is well developed and works.
- Haskins:** It may be wise to have similar discussions regarding the Cedar River facility early in the process.
- Dubrow:** It may offer an opportunity to build design performance standards into the project. I want to be able to evaluate the project based on a set of design principles.
- Sundberg:** The proposals really seemed to pay attention to layout, scale, and materials.
- Dubrow:** This is a nice solution, but I want to ensure that future projects are equally developed.
- Kelly:** CDM is also planning some basic spaces for public accommodation, but it is not a major emphasis.
- Swift:** I appreciate the level of rigor in this design-build-operate project. We need to continue conversations regarding future projects.
- Action:** **The Commission appreciates the thorough presentation and looks forward to early discussions regarding the Cedar River Treatment Facility.**

080698.2    Project: **Intracorp First & Broad Development**  
                  Phase: Alley Vacation (subcommittee: Batra, Darwish, Sundberg)  
   Previous Review: June 4, 1998  
                  Presenters: Karen Anderson-Bittenbender, Intracorp  
                                  Rachel Ben-Shmuel, Ben-Shmuel & Associates  
                                  Chris Libby, GGLO Architects  
                  Attendees: Joan Algarin, Denny Regrade Community Council  
                                  Walter Pulliam, Seattle Heights Condominiums  
                                  Hal Weeks, Arbor Place Condominiums  
                  Time: 1.25 hr. (Hourly)

Intracorp controls a full block site in the Denny Regrade bounded by First and Western Avenues, Broad and Clay Streets. The project is divided into two apartment complexes on the east and west sides of the block. On the east half of the block along First Avenue, 201 residential units are proposed in two 12 story towers. There will also be 6,000 square feet of retail on First Avenue, a courtyard, and main building entrances. Parking would be built below grade with entries off of the alley and Clay Street.

On the Western Avenue side of the block would be 108 residential units in a five story building. The Western Avenue street front would have building entrances, services, and about 4,000 square feet of retail. Parking would be below grade with an entry off of the alley.

Intracorp requests an alley vacation for the unimproved alley between Broad and Clay Streets. The public benefits package proposed as mitigation for the alley vacation contains;

- a \$125,000 cash payment to the Belltown Pea Patch for use in the Growing Vine Street project,
- 309 new housing units downtown,
- retail along Western and First Avenues,
- economic development with the construction and new residents.

With the vacation, Intracorp proposes to create a new alley that will be open 24 hours a day, build part of the required parking under the alley, and provide a skybridge connection between the two apartment buildings.

**Discussion:**

- Dubrow:** What does the current public benefits package consist of?
- Bittenbender:** The public benefits have changed due to the time frame. We will proceed with the First Avenue streetscape and the courtyard, which is not part of the public benefit proposal.
- Simpson:** The First Avenue streetscape is an ongoing project with an informal approach to street trees and furniture as compared to Second Avenue. The First Avenue project includes various types of street trees, serving as an arborist laboratory for the Engineering Department, in addition to sandstone benches from the Wilkison Quarry. The existing purple plums in front of the proposed development will remain along with the cupola stones from the State Capital Building. We are also considering a way to better inform the public of the stones' origins. There is an opportunity with this development to express water detention, which could lead to something interesting within the alley. There are also opportunities to develop retail spaces at grade level that may include affordable or live/work spaces.
- Swift:** Since there won't be a market accessed from the alley, what uses are programmed under the buildings adjacent to the alley?
- Bittenbender:** The alley will be used to access the parking garages. There will be retail spaces along First Avenue and Western Avenue.
- Swift:** What kinds of devices will be used to activate the alley, Broad and Clay Streets?
- Libby:** The north side of the building will have windows, due to the transparency requirements, allowing views into the parking and storage spaces along the steep slopes of Broad Street.
- Dubrow:** The initial idea of a market on the alley was a great way to activate a space that is usually unsafe and unclear. The last proposal included small incubator businesses instead of the market. What does the current proposal include that animates the alley and side streets?
- Bittenbender:** Nothing at this point.
- Libby:** The base material of the buildings will be masonry with a return into the ends of the alley. The alley paving is also an opportunity to work with Buster Simpson.
- Foley:** Where is the public courtyard?
- Bittenbender:** It is on the First Avenue side, between the two apartment towers.
- Batra:** Is their courtyard access from the alley?
- Libby:** There is no public access to the courtyard from the alley, the alley side of the courtyard is one floor above the alley and is for private use by apartment tenants. It is not considered a public amenity or benefit, but does allow more light into the alley and better massing of the building.
- Bittenbender:** The First Avenue public courtyard is not required for bonuses and is not being considered part of the public benefits package. It will allow the retail spaces to wrap around the corner and utilize outside seating if desired.
- Batra:** Why is there no garage entrance off of Broad Street, similar to Clay Street?
- Libby:** Traffic volumes on Broad Street are much greater than on Clay Street.
- Pulliam:** I was enthusiastic about the development as presented to the Denny Regrade Community Council based on the idea of a 24 hour market in the alley. Why is the market no longer part of the project?
- Algarin:** I also heard that a 24 hour market was part of the project. Without the market the alley vacation only benefits the private interests, not the public. Alleys are high crime areas in downtown and a market would create a safe and clean alley. An alley with access to parking is not going to provide the level of security and cleanliness that a market would. It is disappointing to see the market no longer part of the proposal.

- Weeks:** I have contacted a few markets to question them on the idea. Fred Meyer told me that they had not heard about the project. I feel that a market could be enticed into the alley location with an attractive enough offer.
- Bittenbender:** Intracorp has always presented the project with a market component, and without. It was stated as a purely market-driven decision.
- Swift:** The financial question and the measure of how much money constitutes adequate public benefit is not ours to decide.
- Sundberg:** I am encouraged to see that Jack and Buster are working on the project. I am concerned about the garage access from Clay Street, and wonder why all garage access isn't from the alley?
- Libby:** Having everyone exit off the alley creates greater congestion. We were concerned with traffic volumes in the alley and thought that the garage access needed more distribution.
- Dubrow:** I am still looking for a basic level of activity that will animate the street and alley and will provide some level of security. I don't feel it's important to guarantee a market in the alley, but you do need to guarantee something that animates and activates the alley. Something that provides street vitality and safety. At this point it isn't resolved at the design level or the programming level.
- Swift:** This project is a fabulous opportunity for onsite public benefit and mitigation. Seattle is a great place to find little, funky, hole-in-the-wall places that add vitality to our urban fabric. I would support a subcommittee review process to aid in developing onsite public benefit.
- Dubrow:** A lot of the pieces feel slightly out of reach on such a tight schedule. I wonder if there is a way to get design commitments in place. The design doesn't preclude these pieces, but neither does it develop them.
- Foley:** The project lacks the programmatic pieces that would constitute urban design benefit. A small presence on Clay and Broad Streets, maybe in the alley, would greatly enhance the space. There are a number of possibilities and I encourage further development of the program.
- Bittenbender:** Our major constraint is the time frame. We would like to begin construction of the garage in early 1999. We plan to get the permits for the parking garage and building structure by the end of August. The city permit staff have agreed to issue construction permits in two phases. We are hoping that the Design Commission will work with us, granting conditional conceptual approval based on future design reviews, between now and construction. The subcommittee wanted to see a more developed design, but it wasn't possible with the schedule. Therefore we proposed a sum of \$125,000 for mitigation of the alley vacation. The First Avenue improvements and the courtyard are not considered part of the public benefit package and are in addition to the \$125,000.
- Dubrow:** I think the Commissioners have stated concerns about the vitality and activity of the alley and streetscape that is not necessarily tied to the monetary mitigation.
- Bittenbender:** There will be eyes on the alley and the streets from the apartments above. There is a private courtyard west of the alley that is only one floor above the alley. We have discussed the possibility of having live/work studio spaces near the alley.
- Swift:** My sense is that there is continuity in the Commission's concerns between now and the last meeting. There may be a way to structure the action that allows the project to develop these possibilities within the current schedule.
- Dubrow:** Have we reached a decision about the onsite versus offsite mitigation. The subcommittee was shown onsite benefits, now offsite benefits are proposed. If we

want onsite benefits then we need to develop a series of recommendations for City Council. We should also decide on a way of monitoring the review process.

**Sundberg:** I prefer onsite benefits and urban design elements. Given the scale of the project, I think that the vacation mitigation should be onsite.

**Foley:** How did you determine the unfeasibility of retail along Clay Street? Do you want a lease in hand, or was it proposed as speculative retail space?

**Bittenbender:** The steep slopes of Clay and Broad Streets limited the possibility for retail spaces. There really aren't many examples of retail spaces in alleys. We have discussed the idea of incubator businesses.

**Dubrow:** It seems that we need to make a series of decisions.

**Swift:** We need a way to grapple with the schedule that allows for an aggressive pursuit of onsite mitigation.

**Batra:** I could consider benefits within the neighborhood vicinity as onsite mitigation. I am really struggling with the alley development and a lack of safety and security.

**Foley:** I also support onsite mitigation. Programming will be the key to a successful volume of pedestrian activity.

**Action:** **The Commission supports the development of onsite, rather than offsite, mitigation in exchange for the alley vacation and to offset the scale of the project, and makes the following comments and recommendations:**

**The Commission is supportive of the principles, outlined in the subcommittee review of August 3, of onsite public benefits that enhance the public realm. These include:**

- **Artist involvement in extending the First Avenue streetscape plan for trees, benches, other amenities;**
- **develop the courtyard entry as an extension of the First avenue design;**
- **artist designed handrails and benches;**
- **strategies for animating the alley in place of the market;**

**The Commission recommends that City Council grant conceptual approval with the following conditions:**

- **Design Commission review of programming and design improvements, and pedestrian animation;**
- **development of a program for improvements to Clay and Broad Streets;**
- **development of onsite public benefits;**
- **a genuine community review and input process.**

**Prior to City Council approval the Commission requests the proponent's commitment to develop programming elements that will guarantee a basic level of vitality in the street and alley.**

---

080698.3      Project: **Seattle Design Commission Discussion**  
                     Phase: Director Search

The Commission discussed the search for a new Executive Director. The application deadline was Friday, August 7<sup>th</sup>. A subcommittee comprised of Commissioners Swift, Darwish, Dubrow, and Sundberg will meet on August 13 to review applications.

---

080698.4      Project: **Commission Business**

**Action Items:**

- A. MINUTES OF JULY 16 MEETING: Approved as amended.

**Discussion Items:**

- B. RESPONSE TO MAYOR SHELL'S PROPOSAL: Recommended initiatives were presented to Mayor Schell in July and circulated to staff from the Arts and Planning Commissions and the Landmarks Boards, Allied Arts, the AIA and past Design Commission chairs.
- C. SOUND TRANSIT: The SDC will continue to work with the Arts and Planning Commissions and Sound Transit to develop a light rail review panel with representation from each of the Commissions.
- D. SDC HANDBOOK: Commission staff are creating a handbook that will aid city officials, staff, project managers, and consultants in utilizing the Commission's multi-disciplinary advice most effectively. The handbook will cover review of CIP projects, in 5 different phases, as well as special review topics such as street use permits, skybridges, street vacations, unique objects in the ROW, and signs above 65' downtown. The handbook is expected to be completed by the end of September.
- E. EMP TOUR POSSIBLY IN SEPTEMBER: Actual date to be announced.
- F. ACTING DIRECTOR TRANSITION: Michael Read is leaving city employment to work at Pacific Rim Resources. Michael's last day of work with the Design Commission will be August 11<sup>th</sup>. The new acting director as of August 12<sup>th</sup> will be Vanessa Murdock.
- G. SDC LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT OPENING: Barb Swift, Commission Chair, will be stepping down at the end of her current term which ends October 1 of this year. Therefore the landscape architect position of the Commission will need to be filled.
- H. INTERPAC DEVELOPMENT DESIGN REVIEW MEETING AUGUST 18: Available Commissioners are welcome to attend the meeting in the Municipal Building Rm. 221 at 5:30 PM. Commission attendance at the meeting will be an opportunity to ensure that SDC recommendations are not contradictory to Design Review Board's direction.
- I. UW INTERN STUDY OF URBAN DESIGNED UTILITY PROJECTS: Commissioners and staff are in the process of developing the scope for a series of research projects to be completed by UW interns this coming academic year.
- J. DOPAR MAJOR MAINTENANCE PROJECTS: Parks Department staff and members of the community will be invited to discuss the topic at length during the next Commission meeting.



---

080698.5     Project: **Benaroya Hall Tour**  
                 Phase: Site Visit  
                 Time: 1.5 hr. (N/C)

The Design Commission was given a tour of the new symphony hall located between University and Union Streets, Second and Third Avenues.

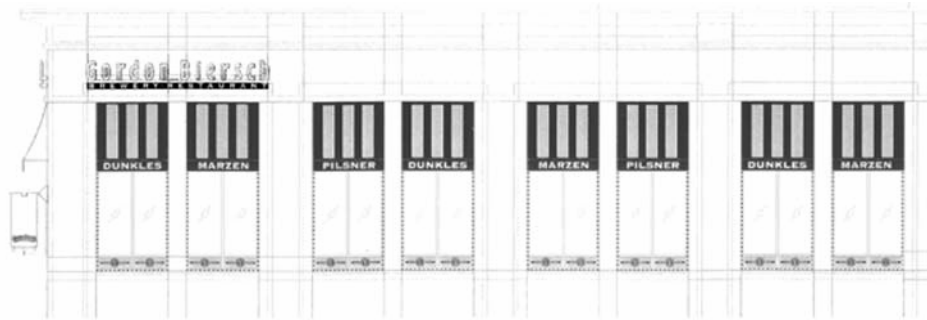


Third Avenue entrance foyer

080698.6      Project: **Pacific Place**  
                  Phase: Sign Permit Special Exception  
          Presenters: Matt Griffin, Pine Street Development  
                  Jane Lewis, Pine Street Development  
                  Time: 1 hr. (hourly)

Pine Street Development has applied for a sign permit special exception for the Pacific Place project, and is the first project to present its proposal to the Commission as per Ordinance 118888. Pacific Place has requested sign permits for signs exceeding the 65 foot limit for its fourth level restaurants;

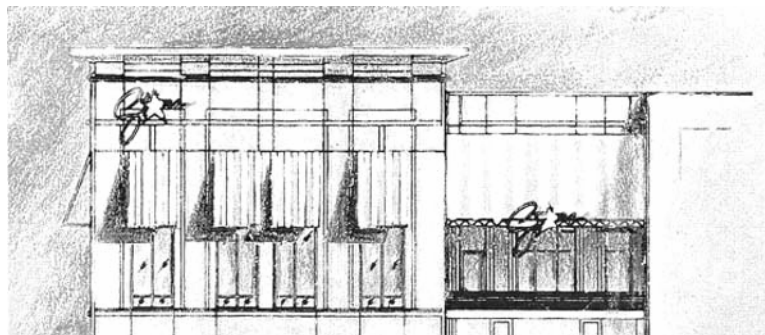
**Gordon Biersch Brewing Company**



**Desert Fire: A Southwestern Grill**



**Stars Restaurant**



Since the fourth level begins at about 65 feet above street level these restaurants are limited to exterior facades above this height. The proposed signage meets the intent of the sign code through the continuation of an integrated Pacific Place signage package, the addition of visual interest and by complementing sophisticated retail signage in the neighborhood, and providing necessary exterior identification.

The special exception is requested based on the proposed signs meeting the first criteria of subsection A (in italics)

*Section 2, subsection A. The proposed sign plan shows an exceptional effort toward creating visual harmony among signs, desirable streetscape features, building facade, and other architectural elements of the building structure through the use of a consistent design theme.*

The proponent contends that this criteria has been met in the following manner:

- the size, scale, location being integrated into the overall signage package,
- consistency with the Pacific Place design to break up scale and reach out to the street,
- enlivening the neighborhood visually while providing important location identification.

The desired characteristics listed in subsection B of the ordinance (italics) have been accomplished as listed below (bullets).

1. *Unifies the project as a whole or contributes positively to a comprehensive building and tenant signage plan.*
  - unified retail, restaurant center open to customers on all levels
  - uniform identification program to ensure restaurants are identifiable, successful
2. *Is compatible with the building facade and scale of building in terms of size, height, and location;*
  - signage consistent with the overall building design; integrated in size, scale, height, location
  - also consistent with scale of smaller “buildings” created by articulated facade
3. *Adds interest to the street level environment, while also identifying upper level businesses;*
  - handsome signage contributes visually, adds second layer of information
  - enlivens streetscape by helping bring the upper reaches of the building to life
4. *Helps orient pedestrians and motorists at street-level in the vicinity of the subject building;*
  - fourth floor location is unusual for restaurants; street-level location more expected
  - signage will provide important identification for both residents and tourists
5. *Integrates support fixtures, conduits, wiring, switches, and other mounting apparatus into the building architecture to the extent feasible.*
  - Entirely accomplished

#### **Discussion:**

**Dubrow:** I appreciate your thorough presentation and detailed graphic information. Based on the criteria of creating visual harmony among signs and other elements, what would you say is the defining thread that unifies these signs?

**Griffin:** All of the signs have three main characteristics; a sophisticated appearance, distance between allowing eyes to rest, and consistent size.

**Dubrow:** The Gordon Biersch signage adds another level of interest with the treatment of the awning.

**Swift:** The building has elegantly scaled elements which the scale of the signs compliment. I find the Stars sign location is the most problematic because it is set apart from the signs below.

**Sundberg:** I actually like the sign shifted to the corner. The scale of the signs seems to fit with the architecture. I am not sure about the Desert Fire sign. It is the only sign that isn't well integrated into the building architecture. I like the finer detail of the Gordon Biersch awnings, but don't think it has to be applied to all the awnings.

**Dubrow:** I agree, the Desert Fire is the only sign that has a “Sunset Strip” appearance.

**Sundberg:** The box behind the text is the problem. Its shape is not integrated so that the architecture reads through it like the other signs.

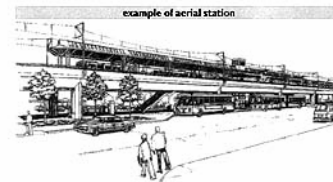
**Batra:** I agree. It stands out visually.

- Griffin:** We had a similar discussion two years ago about canopies and whether or not they should be continuous around buildings or more individual. We are wrestling with letting the individual character of the business come through on a basic architectural background.
- Sundberg:** The architecture does seem to be designed to have signage applied to it, but in a well integrated manner.
- Dubrow:** You have set a pattern in the location of signs not necessarily the size of them.
- Griffin:** The corner location of the Stars sign may create a better link to the corner Nordstrom sign across the street.
- Foley:** I am struggling with a level of paranoia regarding the proliferation of signage downtown. I support the use of more subtle, sophisticated signs, but fear future signs may be too bold and poorly integrated with the buildings.
- Swift:** At a policy level, we may want to consider allowing more signage in certain areas of downtown, such as the retail core, and less in others where it is not in keeping with the character of the area.
- Sundberg:** It is also important to note that the proposed signage is integrated into a new building that was designed for signs.
- Dubrow:** A lively expression of the business logo, such as Desert Fire, may be more appropriate within the building. The proposed Desert Fire sign needs to be more in keeping with the other signs around the building.
- Swift:** All signs, except the Desert Fire sign, are primarily text. The character of the building encourages the use of text signage without the need for icons. This supports the criteria of creating harmony with the building facades and other architectural elements.
- Read:** The Desert Fire sign looks like it is located higher on the facade than the Gordon Biersch and Stars signs. Given that the center section of the building has no cornice element, there needs to be space above the sign for the building to terminate visually. Lowering the sign would increase its integration with the building.
- Dubrow:** The Stars sign is shown in three or four different places on each facade. If the sign was centered on the facade, it would be more consistent with the second and third floor signs below.
- Griffin:** What criteria are you using to support centering the Stars sign?
- Dubrow:** The criteria that calls for an exceptional effort toward creating visual harmony among signs, desirable streetscape features, building facades, and other architectural elements.
- Swift:** Which is a higher priority in your signage plan; the use of text or the use of text and icons?
- Griffin:** The theme of our signage plan is to let each tenant present their individuality without overpowering the building facades or other signs.
- Swift:** Michael Read raised an important point regarding the Desert Fire sign location.
- Sundberg:** I agree with relocating the Desert Fire sign lower on the facade. I also think that the sign should be redesigned with a less conspicuous sign box that emphasizes the text and is better integrated with the building architecture. The building reads through the other signs on this facade and is well integrated; the Desert Fire sign could go on any building anywhere. The Stars sign on the corner doesn't really bother me.
- Swift:** I sounds like there is concurrence on the location of the Desert Fire sign and on the reduced number of Stars signs per facade.

- Griffin:** The corners of the building all have signs with varying locations. I would rather not center it on the facade.
- Dubrow:** Could you move the signs below Stars to the corner as well?
- Griffin:** The Stars sign is square, allowing it to fit within any architectural bay of the facade, while the signs below it are rectangular.
- Foley:** I like the building and the placement of restaurants on the upper levels. If the Gordon Biersch sign is acceptable on the corner, why isn't the Stars sign?
- Dubrow:** It's a matter of how they fit with the other signs on the facade. What other signs are on the Seventh Avenue facade?
- Griffin:** There is a garage entrance sign and Barnes and Noble signs on corner.
- Dubrow:** Consistency is the key issue. If the signage is stacked on the first two levels of a facade, the upper level should continue that visual harmony.
- Action:** **The Commission appreciates the comprehensive nature of the presentation. The Commission has concerns regarding the proliferation of signage in the downtown core and prefaces the following recommendations on specific signs with these important criteria:**
- the Pacific Place building was specifically designed for upper level signage and the mass and scale of the building have been greatly reduced through well-developed facades,
  - the Pacific Place building is located in the retail core
- The Commission makes the following comments and recommendations regarding the three specific signs included in the special exception request:**
- the "Stars" sign should be centered on both facades in an effort to create visual harmony among signs and building facades. Additional "Stars" signs should also be removed from the awnings to minimize signage on the facade;
  - the "Desert Fire" sign should be redesigned to improve its integration with the building and harmony with the other signs. The sign location should be lowered to a similar height as the Gordon Biersch sign;
  - the "Gordon Biersch" sign is appropriate in scale and design, is integrated with the facade, and adds a finer level of detail with the awning treatments. Its corner location on Seventh Avenue is in keeping with the Barnes and Noble signage below.

080698.7      Project: **Sound Transit**  
                  Phase: Briefing  
          Presenters: Debora Ashland, Sound Transit  
                  Paul Bay, Sound Transit  
                  Jim Parsons, PSTC / Sound Transit Consultant  
          Attendees: Stephen Antupit, Strategic Planning Office  
                  Karen Daubert, Seattle Planning Commission  
                  Leslie Gamel, PSTC / Sound Transit  
                  Joe Gildner, Sound Transit  
                  Anne Knapp, Seattle Planning Commission  
                  Diana Painter, Sound Transit  
                  Ed Rose, Seattle Planning Commission  
                  Dominique Sewell, Seattle Arts Commission  
                  John Skelton, Construction and Land Use  
                  Catherine Skinner, Seattle Arts Commission  
                  Jared Smith, Strategic Planning Office  
                  Rhonnel Sotelo Seattle Planning Commission  
                  Julie Speidel, Seattle Arts Commission  
                  Mel Streeter, Seattle Planning Commission  
                  Val Thomas, Seattle Planning Commission  
                  Marcia Wagoner, Pacific Rim Resources  
          Time: 1.5 hr. (hourly)

The Link Light Rail component of Sound Transit comprises Seattle's largest capital investment. It will run south through the Rainier Valley, through the existing downtown tunnel, through a new tunnel under Capitol Hill to the University District. There is a possibility of extending it clear to Northgate as well. Construction on the light rail is scheduled to begin between 2001 and 2003, with service beginning in 2004 to 2005.



Sound Transit is in the process of completing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) which will be distributed for public comment in November. In January of 1999 a public hearing will be held, and in February the locally preferred alternatives will be selected.

A team of architects, landscape architects, urban designers, and contractors was assembled to assist Sound Transit in assembling a set of project objectives that have evolved into the staff recommended design objectives for the project. The design criteria will be informed by the design objectives stated below. The design objectives are divided into three categories; system effectiveness, community fit, and system cost.

**A. SYSTEM EFFECTIVENESS OBJECTIVES – Objectives related to achieving an effective and efficient light rail project to serve real transportation needs of this region's citizens:**

- **Reliability** — The vehicles, facilities, and equipment should be 98% reliable from the outset.
- **Operating Speed** — The curvature, grades, station spacing, and freedom from traffic conflicts should permit operating speeds to compare favorably with travel by private auto.
- **Passenger Capacity** — The system should be capable of accommodating the peak periods and all-day ridership demands of the public in all segments, including allowance for growth.

- **Modal Integration** — the design should provide for efficient and convenient connections with buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians, acting as a major north-south trunk for the region's entire, integrated transit system.
  - **Passenger Comfort and Convenience** — The vehicles, stations, and facilities should provide for the physical comfort and convenience of passengers.
  - **Expandability** — The design of the system should allow for future extensions and/or connections with other modes, without major reconstruction requirements.
- B. Community Fit Objectives – Objectives related to achieving the goals of the neighborhoods and communities through which the light rail system passes, including economic development, identity, aesthetics, and livability.**
- **Visual Appearance** — Vehicles, stations, and guideways should be designed to fit the scale and character of the neighborhood, and be an attractive addition.
  - **Community Identity** — Facilities should provide for acknowledgment of the characteristics and population of the neighborhood; and for resident recognition and “ownership.”
  - **Transit Service to Existing Activity Centers** — Alignments, stations, and connecting modes should provide for service to as many important population and employment centers in the corridor as feasible.
  - **Development Potential** — Designs of stations should permit the private sector, cities, and Sound Transit to pursue new, transit-oriented land development in and around station areas.
  - **Neighborhood Livability** — Designs should consciously seek to achieve pedestrian-friendly and livable, human scale facilities, including streetscapes, landscaping, station facilities, and other physical features.
  - **Safety and Security** — Designs of all passenger facilities should consider security and safety issues and apply proven methods of enhancing passengers' real and perceived sense of security.
  - **Noise and Vibration** — Designs should minimize noise and vibration, both for passengers and for system neighbors, including homes and businesses.
  - **Traffic Impacts** — The impacts of changes in traffic patterns and volumes as a result of the light rail system should be generally positive for those affected.
- C. SYSTEM COST OBJECTIVES – Objectives related to building the light rail system within the *Sound Move* budget for the project, and to provide for long-term efficiency in operating costs and maintenance of the system.**
- **Capital Costs** — Designs should provide for the system to be constructed within budget, with the maximum possibility of extending to Northgate.
  - **Operational Costs** — Designs should permit operations to take place cost-effectively, and should seek to learn from experience in other light rail systems to minimize “deadheading,” avoid operational inflexibility, provide for efficient fare collection, and other operating plan measures.
  - **Maintainability** — All facilities should be designed to be maintainable with minimum cost, and to be attractive not only on opening day, but far into the future.

Also presented was a list of potential opportunities for the public art program, as well as design issues reviewed for light rail which include the station and station site, Park-and-Ride, transportation interfaces, aerial guideways, portals and other transition structures, streetscapes for at-grade and aerial sections, and traction power substations.

#### **Discussion:**

**Batra:** How many public hearings have you had?

**Bay:** We are required to have one public hearing regarding the DEIS, but will have a total of five or six. We plan to have a fall outreach, prior to the DEIS being distributed, to inform neighborhoods. We want to inform the communities early so that there aren't any surprises when the DEIS is sent out. The major issue facing us now is how we develop, out of the design objectives, criteria that ensure

appropriate levels of consistency and approaches to individual neighborhood character.

**Dubrow:** These design objectives seem to be concentrated on the physical characteristics of the various elements. I wonder if a list of social or cultural goals and objectives wouldn't be useful in guiding the design decisions.

**Bay:** The major social function is to provide safe and efficient transportation. This is coupled with environmental awareness issues and ensuring that the benefits of the Light Rail system are distributed equally and accessible to everyone.

**Dubrow:** It may be worth discussing. Without principles to guide the development, it may be more difficult to ensure that social objectives are met and critically evaluated.

**Ashland:** We have considered social issues, but have tried to tailor this presentation around the major design issues.

**Swift:** This presentation helps me understand when and how the Design Commission can best dovetail with your efforts. It seems that the best way would be to take the three major objectives—system effectiveness, community fit, system cost—with the range of respective elements and make recommendations tied to the design objectives and guidelines.

**Dubrow:** Your presentation offers a nice structure for making recommendations.

**Parsons:** Our major recommendation is to have a balanced approach to station area design and planning, with some continuity and some variability between stations.

**Dubrow:** Within that balanced approach are many levels of interpretation in terms of the amount of continuity or variability. A hard copy outline of the presentation would be helpful in developing our recommendations along the lines of your objectives.

**Swift:** It is important that our recommendations mesh with your objectives as much as possible.

**Dubrow:** I wonder if there is an opportunity for incremental development and re-iteration rather than having everything planned and designed initially. Incremental development would have added richness and variety allowing future design to overlay the existing elements.

**Daubert:** I am wondering how this discussion fits into the purpose of the Tri-Commission?

**Swift:** The notion of a Tri-Commission has recently met some resistance within city departments and is being retooled. These design objectives and criteria fall within the mandate of the Design Commission and in the spirit of a coordinated effort we have invited the Planning and Arts Commissions to join in the discussion. It is important, regardless of how the review process is ultimately organized, that we move ahead with recommendations and design criteria.

**Smith:** The proposal will move forward and it is critical that we continue at the current pace. It will have a lot to do with Sound Transit's discussions regarding staffing.

**Sotelo:** Today's presentation and subject-matter seem to fall well within the purview of the Design Commission. The Planning Commission should be concerned more with the urban fabric, station area planning, and neighborhood fit. The notion of a combined review panel makes sense.

**Swift:** This is a good opportunity to avoid the separation of planning and design that so often occurs in projects of this type.

**Thomas:** Some here are concerned with design aspects, others with planning aspects. I am wondering how we will make sure that after value-engineering is through, the product is what we expected.

**Dubrow:** Perhaps a system of weighting the recommendations in terms of importance and priority, coupled with a statement of the intentions, would be helpful. The Tolt



Treatment facility is an example of using a prioritized list of recommendations to guide development.

- Planning Comm.:** This project represents such a broad range of design and planning requirements which will require a multi-disciplinary approach to the review process.
- Arts Comm.:** I appreciate getting a sense of the project early on. It is important that a process is in place to ensure that high quality artists are involved and that major issues are thoroughly developed.
- Ashland:** The artist selected to coordinate the art program for the project is Norie Sato. She will also work closely with the design teams.
- Arts Comm.:** Integration of the station area planning, station design, and art programs is crucial. The various areas of expertise represented in the Tri-Commission could work well together.
- Streeter:** Are there a series of established milestones for the project?
- Bay:** Yes. The first is the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will be completed this November. The DEIS will enable the Sound Transit Board to select the “locally preferred” alternatives. The next milestones will be 30%, 65%, 95%, and 100% design completion, which will each be brought to the city for review. We are developing the design criteria early because we want to work closely with city staff as the project develops.
- Swift:** There seems to be two issues on the table today. The first is continued development of a multi-Commission review panel to be operational in September. The second issue concerns the need for the project to continue moving forward. The Design Commission needs to move ahead in developing recommendations tied to the design objectives as presented.
- Ashland:** The larger policy issues will need to be dealt with by the Sound Transit Board prior to adopting the design objectives.
- Swift:** What type of policy issues will the Board be discussing? What is the timeline for the policy discussions and the Design Commission recommendations tied to the design objectives?
- Bay:** An example of the types of policy issues to be discussed is whether or not to allow concessions, ATM’s, etc. in the stations.
- Ashland:** They will be general policy statements.
- Smith:** What will be the avenue for getting the Boards decisions distributed?
- Ashland:** A resolution will be passed regarding the policy issues by September 10.
- Swift:** A Design Commission subcommittee will be activated and we will disperse our comments and recommendations to the various commissions to maintain an ongoing dialogue.
- Action:** **The Commission greatly appreciates the briefing and will make final recommendations regarding the Design Objectives after an in depth discussion scheduled for the August 20<sup>th</sup> Design Commission meeting.**